

PVRC NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2001

CALL FOR PAPERS by Dick Wilder, K3DI

As we prepare to boost our club competition scores for this season, it is my feeling that there should be a glance toward future years by having an ongoing effort to entice locals hams into trying contesting and to urge independent testers into PVRC. One approach is to make full FREE use of The Foundation For Amateur Radio (FAR) monthly Autocall magazine that goes out to 3,000 area Hams. I approached John Queen, KA0SEY, Autocall editor, who said he would be glad to feature a monthly column about contesting, and I am volunteering to organize that task. Rich, KE3Q, wrote the first column for "Contesting" that will appear in the November Autocall. You guessed it, Rich's article describes setting all-time records as WP3R.

John Queen said that about 700 words fills one page and would be a nice size for "Contesting" though I've noticed he does accept longer columns. Since I'm not a writer, I'm encouraging members who enjoy writing to submit articles. Do you have something in mind that is either already written, or would you like to write an occasional article for the Autocall column? If the article is too long, I can edit it to size or break it into pieces to run over several months. The subject of the articles can be anything you think that is of interest to testers. It is hoped that articles will come from numerous writers so as not to burden anyone and to give "Contesting" a fresh viewpoint each month. Interested? Please see my contact information on the reference page. Though this appeal is for "Contesting" in Autocall, it can be expected that many of the articles submitted will appear in both Autocall and the PVRC Newsletter.

SWEEPSTAKES; TAKE BACK THE GAVEL by Tyler Stewart, K3MM

It's time to circle the wagons for Sweepstakes! We need every member to do their part this time in an all-out effort to take back the Unlimited gavel. SMC and NCCC will be out for blood and we will need a substantially larger score than last year's best to take it back. This means we need EVERYONE's participation. I remind all of our members that your club due's are to submit 2 scores per year in club competition contests. We'd like to encourage you to make Sweepstakes the first two priorities for the contest season. I've asked all the Regional Chairmen to arrange to contact all members in their region to get the word out and help our members get on the air for SS. If you need assistance of any kind, please contact them and ask for it. If you can't operate your station, ask them to find someone who would like to use it. If you need a station, ask them to help you find one. Make good use of the PVRC email reflector if you have any questions or needs for SS.

Pete, N4ZR, has put together a very nice package of awards just for Sweepstakes to provide extra incentive to our members. Please read his column in this newsletter for all the details. In addition, PVRC 5 Million Award points will be doubled for all single op efforts this time. All this is geared towards improving our participation numbers and time served. The way sweepstakes is scored, with the limited number of multipliers, score progression is relatively linear in relation to the amount of time you operate. So do the time, and you will be rewarded. No matter how good or bad your station or operating skills are, the more time you put in, the more you'll help yourself and PVRC. In fact, my favorite club award for this contest is the one that rewards only total operating time. No matter what your score is, all we can ask is that you do your best by putting in the time to do your best.

Unlike most DX contests, SS doesn't take huge or high antennas to win. It takes operating skill, perseverance, and efficient antennas and station design.

There have been lots of articles written about strategies for SS...many are available online. I invite you to search these out using the PVRC web site, contesting.com, and many others on the internet.

Operating times can be important for the full time guys. I think the usual period to take time off is from about 2 to 6 AM (local time) in the morning on Sunday and then some half-hour periods Sunday afternoon during the ball games. I usually go until at least 2:30 AM local and it may pay to get on a little earlier than 6 AM. If you've decided you can only put in a few hours, I would concentrate on early evenings, early morning, and particularly very late in the contest when everyone else will be hungry for contacts!

As with most contests (if not all), going for rate is the main key to success. I never hunt for multipliers until late on Sunday in SS. Usually they'll come to you or you'll find them without trying hard, especially on phone. Even when I'm looking for that elusive VE1 or VY1, I always work any new QSO. In addition I will never sacrifice rate to hunt for the last couple multipliers. This usually means Cq'ing all the time for high power or S02R guys. Yes, it's nice to be able to say you got the sweep, but your score will suffer significantly if you stop everything else to hunt for that needle in the hay stack.

Remember that there are no band multipliers and you can only work each station once, so play to your stations strengths. If you are really antenna poor on one particular band, concentrate on the other adjacent bands. If you don't have an 80 meter antenna, concentrate on 40 and 20 when they have short skip. Also look for late evening backscatter openings on the high bands, where you beam due West and work back into the east coast. These openings can be really substantial and you don't want to miss them. It's important to have low dipoles or other high angle antennas for 40 and 80 to work. With the current flux numbers, 40 meters will probably be a very important band at night and 40 meter phone on Sunday morning is usually very good for SS. If the flux gets high enough, you may have to transfer this strategy to 20 meters instead of 40, but I would expect both to be very good in the early morning hours with relatively high angle antennas (horizontal antennas at around 50 feet high). If you are starting from scratch on antennas, I would think the most important thing you could do is throw up a couple of low dipoles (or second choice, inverted V's) for 40 and 20 at about 45 feet elevation at the center. Just these two antennas on those two bands should give you a very good score as long as you put in the time. The 40 can usually be loaded on 15 as well. I've usually found that my station works best on the lowest of the open bands. Since there is such a high concentration of stations on the east coast or in the eastern US, it's important to work the shorter paths, which means using the lowest of the open bands. Don't sacrifice rate to do this, but if I have a choice of 15 or 20 meter CW with equivalent rates, I'll take 20 every time. It's usually much more difficult to find good short-skip conditions than to work all of California. I always figure that I'll have plenty of slack time during the afternoon to work all the 7's and 6's I could want on Sunday afternoon. I'll take the short paths when I can make them produce good rates. On phone, 10 meters could be a much more important band. There are still a lot of no-coders and 10-10'ers on 10 meters that you may not work anywhere else, so plan on spending at least some time on 10 phone. Lastly, experience is always the best tool. Trust your experience to know what works for you and your station. Feel free to try different things, but carefully note the affect on your rate and learn from your experiments. This can be the most rewarding part of contesting. Everything I've written here is a very brief and rough guideline...I usually find myself surprised by conditions at least once during the contest and it's important to recognize these changes and to remain flexible.

With computerized log checking, accuracy is very important these days, and SS has the most complicated exchange of any contest. Be careful to copy every piece of information and ask for repeats as needed. There is no partial credit here. One little mistake and the whole contact is null and void.

This will likely be the last newsletter you see before the CW weekend (first weekend in November) in SS. Let's all put forth a monster effort and get the job done! Again, if you need any assistance, please contact your Regional Chairman as soon as possible so we can try and get you fixed up. Good hunting and GO PVRC!

PVRC PRESIDENT'S REPORT; "AMATEUR RADIO IS THE KING OF HOBBIES"
by Brian McGinness, N30C

A few weeks ago, I received a QSL card from a station in Japan, with "Amateur Radio is the King of Hobbies" printed in large letters on the front. That caused me to sit back and think of what ham radio and PVRC have meant to me.

It is really amazing to step back and look at all the aspects of amateur radio. There is so much out there. When you grow tired of one thing, there are a dozen more out there to challenge us. I still find it magical to routinely speak with other hams all over the world, using no more power than a handful of light bulbs. It just floors me that my signal from my antenna in my back yard goes all over the world!

Not forgetting VHF, there are similar goings on there too. Nothing thrilled me more than parking my 1296 mhz signal in a tropo duct and working stations hundreds of miles away. And there are plenty of bands above that I haven't even touched.

And then, of course, there's contesting. That's what we do, be it on HF or VHF. We learn how to construct technically competent stations, we learn how to work stations incredibly fast, and some of us learn how to stay up for most of 48 hours and be top ten single ops.

We learn how to do this under fantastic, impossible, or anything in-between conditions. We use current technology as an adjunct to help us do this, but in the end it's still old-fashioned radio. How many times have you heard "hasn't the internet made ham radio go away"? Obviously it hasn't.

Amateur radio really is the king of hobbies!

Things are going well with PVRC. The summer saw an excellent summer meeting season, starting with the annual W3LPL open house in June. That was followed by the unveiling of the new K4JA Taj-Mahal and super station, in the Virginia's "northern neck". Congratulations, Paul, sit down, take a rest and catch your breath! And the summer season was capped off by the annual W3YOZ fowlfest in August. Thanks again Marty, for having us over!

We are working now on the fall meeting schedule and agendas. We will again try to have some kind of presentation at each meeting, probably starting with a demonstration of a full Writelog setup, including networking, voice keyer and mic control via the sound blaster, recording the contest, rig control with RS-232 PTT, etc. If anyone has any suggestions on future speakers or presentations, please get in touch with Jack (K4VV).

Tyler (K3MM) should be well on his way to finalizing our plan for sweepstakes this year. We plan on contacting each region and asking them to contact their members and do everything possible to get people on the air. We need more logs in order to win this again. We also plan some incentives, both for participation and for the top scorers.

I have been in touch with the presidents of the other 12 major US contest clubs, in an ongoing discussion on how WRTC candidates are selected. As I have indicated before, some of the smaller clubs are really sore at the selection process that was used this time. I don't think PVRC is all that excited about it either, given that we could not get one person selected. But I want us to take the high road here - let's get 100% behind WRTC-2002 and support it - and we will work with the other club presidents to try to put a better system in place before the next

WRTC. Right now the ideas being bounced around range from a pre-qualification USRTC to letting each club select their own representative, and most things in-between.

I tend to support letting each club select their own representative. I have a couple reasons for this. For one, it promotes membership in a contest club. Yes, there might be some good ops that don't have access to a contest club. But if you think about it, almost any amateur sport demands belonging to some club or association to compete at the top level. Also, it is certainly less controversial than what happened this year, which was about as bad as it could get without getting out of control. And it is easy to implement, especially compared to staging a USRTC.

So we'll see what happens here. I will keep everyone informed. I believe that if all the major contest clubs in the US can agree on a selection process, any future WRTC sponsors would almost have to adopt it.

I am deeply saddened, as I am sure all PVRers are, about the events of the last two weeks. Being an emergency service provider myself, I knew as soon as the first building fell that the loss to the FDNY alone was going to be tremendous.

Contesting, at times like this, is a far away thought (but not forgotten!). Although the need for ham radio for the Pentagon portion of the disaster was minimal, it had potential. As testers, we have some of the biggest stations in the area. So, please, take a moment and familiarize yourself with emergency procedures. Find out where the your local emergency nets is, and be ready to help. I hope we can get some info about this non-contesting topic in a future newsletter.

Pete, N4ZR has finalized the 2001 sweepstakes club award program. It is on the web page in the members only area, and in this edition of the newsletter.

CONTEST PREPARATION AND OPERATING by Ken Claerbout K4ZW

Last month we looked at station preparation and strategy planning. We're now a couple of weeks away from the beginning of the contest season and CQ WW SSB. The trees have been changing colors, there's a chill in the air, and the days are shorter which means the low bands (my favorites) are coming back to life. It's a great time of the year!

But before 00:00Z rolls around, let's take a look at a few more pre-contest items. For the serious tester, it's imperative that you spend as much time in the operating chair as physically possible. For several weeks leading up to the contest, I like to spend a little extra time in the health center. I find that pushing myself harder in the gym can pay off with increased stamina. Secondly, I try to get at least 8 hours of sleep per night for the entire week leading up to the contest and also I try to keep my stress level at work as low as possible. The key is to preserve your energy as much as possible. For me it's imperative that I take off of work on Friday. Friday morning is spent turning up all of the equipment and playing around on the air. This is similar to a band doing their sound checks before a concert. It's helpful to take a nap in the late afternoon. If you're not able to take off on Friday, don't throw in the towel. The first time I finished in the top 10 of a contest (1987 ARRL SSB), I came home from work on Friday not sure how much time I would spend operating. One thing led to another and I wound up with my first top ten finish ever using a tribander and vertical.

Ok it's 00:00Z and time to get rolling. If your station is geared more to the search and pounce mode, 15 meters can be a good starting point at this stage in the sunspot cycle. The first half-hour or so can be used to scoop up JA's and stuff in the Pacific. Remember that you are now a tester so don't get caught playing DXer. While it may be tempting, it's counterproductive to spend minutes in a pile-up for multipliers especially at the beginning of a

contest. At this point, you're going to be battling even the big guns that also need that same multiplier. Chances are, that station will be around later or even the next day. If your station is capable of running, then you will likely start on 15 or 20 meters. If it's a CW contest, 40 meters is most always a good bet. As I mentioned last month, a band plan will help you to plan ahead of time, where to be and when. Don't forget to spend some time on 40 and 80 meters prior to sunrise in Europe. Those bands are loaded with multipliers and signals typically peak at that time. A number of stations in the Caribbean will jump to 160 meters at the top of the hour beginning around 05Z. It doesn't hurt to make a quick trip to the topband at the beginning of the hour starting around 05Z.

Following European sunrise, you have a decision to make. 20 meters can be quiet good to Europe and the low bands can produce some very nice multipliers in the Pacific. It's also a time when you might want to get a few hours of sleep if necessary. Whatever you decide to do, you must be ready to roll and maximize your performance once 15 and 10 meters open to Europe. Late afternoon on Saturday and Sunday is a good time to point the antenna to the southeast. Very reasonable rates can be had on 10 and 15 meters tuning around working the Caribbean, Central and South America. It's also a very good way to boost your multiplier total. Early evening will be spent working the Pacific and Asia on 10 and 15 meters. Sunday around 02Z (Saturday evening local) is typically a slow time. You might want to consider taking a break now in lieu of something later in the morning if you feel the need to do so. Again, the goal is to be ready for the morning European run.

Lets take a look at some additional steps to maximize your score. Obviously the more time you can spend operating, the greater the benefit to your score. The top SOAB stations will operate between 42 and the full 48 hours. Keep an eye on needed multipliers. This can be done by reviewing multiplier sheets or better yet, contest software will allow you to open a window that shows whether a country being worked is needed on other bands. You would be well advised to use this feature if you were not already doing so. Moving multipliers. This is where you move a station to another band in order to get a new multiplier. Some people do not like doing this. I will consider moving a station that calls me or one that is CQing without any answers. I do not work someone in a pile-up and ask them to move to a needed band. That's the surest way to draw the ire of your fellow testers. It's helpful to know which DX stations are operating in the multi-multi category. For example, if you work J3A on 15 and notice you need them for a multiplier on 10, ask the operator for their 10 meter frequency. The last couple of hours in a contest can be kind of slow from a QSO total standpoint. You may be better off hopping around the bands picking up multipliers. Working a handful of multipliers per hour will likely do more to your bottom line than the 30 - 40 QSO's per hour you might work if calling CQ. This doesn't mean however, that you should pass over a QSO just because it is not a multiplier. Take all the points you can get!

I hope you find some of what was presented over the past two months useful. If nothing else, I hope that it will spur others to share their experiences with our members. We have a wealth of talent in PVRC that needs to be shared. Good luck!

CONTEST SOFTWARE, OLD AND NEW By Brian McGinness N3OC

At the June summer meeting at W3LPL, several of you requested some information about the various contest logging software that is available. I promised we would follow up on this, so here is some information that hopefully will benefit both new and experienced testers.

There are a wide variety of programs available, either free or for less than \$100. Most are a deal considering the time the authors spend with them, and tend to be a labor of love rather than any big money-making thing. Some programs are DOS, and some are Windows. Some of the DOS versions will run in a Windows DOS window, others will not.

It seems inevitable that DOS will eventually disappear. The dilemma most of us face today is that when we get the

latest new PC, there is less and less and eventually no DOS support. That results in either a boot manager allowing the system to boot DOS just for contests, or switching over to a Windows application. I have just begun the conversion to Writelog and find it packed full of features I had no idea existed!

But more on that later. I want to start with the minimum you will need to get started with a program that will take and score your contest log. The three most popular DOS contest loggers are CT, NA and TR.

The recent requirement of the Carbillio format for your log submission, plus y2k changes mean that all of the programs have new versions. That does not mean you can't use the old versions, it just means you might have an additional step to correct dates or convert the log to the Carbillio output. There are utility programs out there to do this for a log taken with an older version.

CT Version 6.26 was released as a shareware version. We have that available and can email you the small zip file (around 250k) for a fully functioning version 6. It has rig control for a few rigs, support for the major contests, and support for packet. It will produce an output that has y2k issues that can be corrected, and the logs can be converted externally to Carbillio. It has country and section files that are current, so if you aren't sure you want to spend the money just yet, we can make this available to anyone who wants it. So if you are looking for a way to get on for SS this fall, and don't want to have to purchase any software, you can use this.

The current CT version is 9.63 and of course supports more features than the shareware version such as band maps, master callsign databases, two-rig control, networking, more radios supported, and the Carbillio output just to name a few things. CT can be purchased at <http://www.k1ea.com> for \$79.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

To correct the y2k problems with the log, you can use an editor, search for the bad year and automatically replace them each with the correct year. For a log made today, I searched for "-Aug-01" and replaced it with "-Aug-2001" and it looked fine. Then use a Carbillio conversion utility, and your log is ready to submit. Maybe it's worth the money to buy the current version!

The next popular DOS program is NA by K8CC. I have never used it, but it has a lot of features also, especially for two radio support. There is a demo version available at <http://www.datonline.com>, so you can try before you buy. The full version sells for \$60 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling. I believe the demo version supports SS.

The third major DOS program is TR, by N6TR. I have not used this one either. There is a full featured trial version available at <http://www.kkn.net/~k5tr/trlog/trfree.zip>. It only allows a limited number of contacts. The full version costs \$60 plus \$4 shipping and handling, and can be purchased at <http://www.contesting.com/tr>. TR also has a program to convert its logs to Carbillio format at <http://www.qth.com/tr/post656.zip>

For those of you who have a new PC that just does not want to run DOS, I will try to introduce you to a couple windows programs. Most of the Windows programs can also use the computer's sound card to decode RTTY and PSK31, as well as play voice keyer messages, so some of this newer software takes station automation to the next level, with the computer doing more, and hardware doing less.

Writelog seems to have emerged as the premier windows based contest logger, so I will devote most of the windows section to it. As a windows application, you will be able to use your windows-supported hardware directly, without having to find a DOS driver for it. This simplifies the system hardware issues. No packet drivers are needed for the network, and no TSRs are needed for the serial ports.

You may have heard that Writelog can be made "just like CT". This is partially correct. Writelog can be set to use many of the same keys as CT. The F1-F12 function keys can be made to be the same as CT, as well as the spacebar to check a call, insert to send an exchange, and + to log the QSO and send QRZ. So the basic logging remains the same.

With some careful mouse work, the various windows like rate, summary, super check partial, check country and packet announcements can be put in similar positions as they would be in CT. So once you remap the keys, and setup the windows the way you want them, it does become similar to CT to do basic logging and exchanges.

From there the similarity to CT stops, and the complexity to operate the program increases. Writelog is a powerful program, and takes some careful configuration to take advantage of all of it's features. On my recent trip to St. Martin I had the opportunity to use it in both the dxpedition and IOTA contest modes. On that trip I used a laptop, and for the first time was able to have a voice keyer implemented in a laptop. Writelog is able to use your windows-supported sound chip as your voice keyer on SSB, as well as the RTTY & PSK encoder/decoder for digital modes.

In fact, Writelog can work with two radios. Since your sound card is stereo, you can configure one radio on the left channel, and another on the right channel. The program displays two logging windows when two radios are selected.

Writelog can also use the sound blaster to record the entire contest. While this may bring up ethical questions as to it's use, you can click on a QSO in the log and replay just that QSO! RTTY and/or PSK31 are also re-decoded in real time when replaying QSOs.

The networking seems a little cumbersome to activate, but bulletproof in all other regards. If you can see the other computer in Network Neighborhood, then the Writelog network will work. If QSOs are missed, the program equalizes the logs when that computer connects. It's really neat to watch an empty log suddenly fill up with QSOs when it joins the network!

Unfortunately, you do not seem to be able to set it to activate the network without intervention from the op at each computer. You have to define that workstation to the network, then join the network, each time Writelog is restarted. It takes a couple mouse clicks, but it's not too bad.

The PTT feature in another one that is well thought-out in Writelog. If your rig supports it, Writelog can use the computer interface to command your rig to key and dekey! At FS/N30C, the voice keyer and RTTY PTT were all done via serial data instead of a hard PTT line. It worked perfectly. You can also configure any variation of serial or LPT ports to do the usual hardware PTT, on the same pins most other programs use (means your keyer and PTT cables from CT will work as is, as well as your direct FSK cables from RITTY!).

Super-check partial is implemented via the same master.dta file that CT uses. I just pointed Writelog to the one already in my CT subdirectory, and I was all set.

The RTTY decoder in Writelog works pretty well, although I hear K6STI's RITTY decodes fluttery signals much better. I didn't have any fluttery signals at FS/N30C, so I was happy to use the built in RTTY decoder. Writelog also supports the newer versions of K6STI as well as the new MMTTY.DLL as it's RTTY modem.

Writelog costs \$75. Further info is available at <http://www.writelog.com>

I also came across another dandy RTTY and PSK windows terminal, which is shareware. TrueTTY, by UA90SV

seems to be a fine RTTY and PSK encoder and decoder. It is not a logger, but makes a great shareware program to get your RTTY and PSK31 hardware tuned up and working. It has the best tuning display I have seen yet, with both a spectrum display as well as a o'scope display that helps you keep the amplitude set properly to avoid clipping.

It seems to have one of the best PSK31 tuning screens I have seen yet. I find it much easier to use TrueTTY on PSK31 than I do Writelog's built-in interface. TrueTTY can be downloaded at <http://www.dxsoft.com/mitrtty.htm>

2001 SWEEPSTAKES -- INTRA-CLUB COMPETITION AND AWARDS

I. Recognition

PVRC First Time Contributor Award - Certificate to every member who enters SS (either mode) for the first time in 2001.

PVRC Live Wire Award - Certificate with endorsement levels (sticker), based on operating time:

Silver - 12 hours (one or both modes)

Gold - 24 hours (one or both modes)

Platinum - 36 hours (both modes)

(plus PVRC emblem pin)

Diamond - 48 hours (both modes)

(plus PVRC emblem pin)

PVRC Top Gun Award - Mug with club logo for combined SS contribution of 250,000 points or more in 2001

II. Competition

Best Turnout - A plaque to the region with the highest percentage turnout (total, both modes).

Most Improved - A plaque to the region that achieves the greatest increase in its percentage of entries this year over last.

Best Average Score Increase - A plaque to the region that improves its average entry the most.

Top First-Time Entrant - A plaque to the best score by a first-time entrant (either mode)

Top Regional Score, CW and SSB - Certificates to the highest-scoring single operators in each mode in each region, whether pure single-op or unlimited.

Top Regional Single Op Unassisted Score, CW and SSB - Certificates, awarded to the next placing entry in the event that the top regional score in either mode is unassisted.

Top Regional Single Op Unlimited Score, CW and SSB - Certificates, on the same basis as above.

Top Comeback - Certificate to the best score by an operator who has not participated in SS for the last 5 years (1996-2000)

NORTHWEST MEETING NOTES FOR AUG
by Ed Steeble, K3IXD, Chairman

The NW region met at Paradise Grill in Frederick on August 21, 2001. Attending were: N3VOP, NE3H, K3WC, W4XP, W8ZA, WD3A, W3TEF, N3COP, W8LRL, K3UL, K3SX, K3SKE, N3KTV, AD3F, K03GA, W3EKT, and K3IXD.

In the business part of the meeting -

- 1) The members voted in Chris (also known as Tiny), K03GA. Chris was sponsored by W8ZA and is one of the W8ZA crew.**
- 2) The NW region voted to nominate W3EKT as a member of the month, to be featured on the PVRC web page. W3EKT agreed and will submit a picture and a short write up to N4ZR.**
- 3) And SS was covered.**

Around the table -

Mike, N3VOP: he has 200 grids on 6m and is working on confirming grids on 6m AM. He will be on for the September VHF contest.

Joe, NE3H: The K3MQH site has been sold to WA1HHN. The packet node is still there but now with the W3BD call sign.

Dusty, K3WC: His tower is still on the ground, the antenna is still in the shed, etc. Dusty has a TenTec Omni 6+ and an Amertron 80B w/ 3-500 tubes for sale. This is an estate sale. Contact Dusty via email or packet if interested.

Chuck, W4XP: K8GP multi-op VHF contest station now has five towers mounted on three busses. They are set up for EME on 144, 432 and 1296mHz. He will be one of the K8GP ops in the September VHF contest. Chuck reported that W3IY did very well in the microwave contest this past weekend. In response to questions, Chuck discussed what is needed to be a rover. In summary a Yaesu FT-736R and a Create log periodic antenna will get you started, however the Ed's (W3EKT and K3IXD from the ex-W3EKT/R team) added that mono band beams and 300w bricks are necessary for a more serious effort.

Bob, W8ZA: He is working on his 15m beam and preparing for the upcoming contest season, again as a multi-op entry.

Tom, WD3A: Again, he will be one of the W8ZA ops. And he expects that he will be asked to climb some of the towers.

Roy, W3TEF: He was in the area so he stayed for dinner and the meeting. Roy is one of the crew at W3Y0Z's in the VHF contests. At home Roy operates 1.8 thru 432 mHz.

Arthur, N3COP: He and his wife were going to dine out, saw all the ham license plates in the parking lot, and ended up joining us for dinner and conversation.

Wal, W8LRL: Wal joined us and brought K3UL, Bob, as a guest.

Bob, K3UL: Operates 1.8 thru 50 mHz but is mostly on 160m.

Sid, K3SX: has 212/212 countries worked/confirmed on 160m. On 6m he has 45 countries confirmed. Sid will be at K8GP in the VHF contest and operating on the 222 mHz and up bands.

Dan, K3SKE: His packet node is working FB. He suggested that the dates be included in future SS emails.

Jim, N3KTV: He took down his home brewed 222 antennas from the K3MQH site. He was at the Boy Scouts National Jamboree at AP Hill. The amateur radio set up was impressive. K2BSA/4 was on the air, manned by 40 hams, 30 of which were adults and 10 were scouts, from 8AM to 5PM. About every 30 minutes they gave a tour and demo. Then from 7PM to 10PM the station was open for operating by licensed personnel. The Army did an excellent job on the logistics and erecting the antenna support four poles. There were antennas for 1.8 thru VHF.

Gene, AD3F: He is putting up a Trylon 64 foot tower, currently it is at 48 feet. It will house HF and VHF antennas. Gene sought advice on VHF antennas and also on gin poles.

Chris, K03GA: He is helping N4ZR with a web database. Chris is one of the W8ZA crew, joining the team late last year. He is stationed at Ft. Detrick and conducted an Amateur Radio Class.

Ed, W3EKT: He helped K3MQH take down the microwave antennas. His \$600 tax refund check was used to purchase a Force 12 C-3E antenna.

Ed, K3IXD: Ed was the ground crew when N3KTV took down the 222 antennas at K3MQH. Then N3KTV installed new 7/8 inch hard line for K3IXD's 1296 run. Before the installation Ed was getting 6 watts at the top of the tower, now it is 9 watts. In the UHF contest, he was able to work K2UOP/8 without any trouble. Before, even before the tree leaves came out, he and K2UOP were only able to make a marginal 1296 QSO. Ed will be on for the September VHF contest.

The NW Region meetings are on the third Tuesday of the month. Most arrive after 6PM for dinner; the meeting begins at 7:15 PM. The September meeting will be at the Paradise Grill, 1275 W. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD. 301-682-6066. It is in the Frederick Shoppers World, across the Street from PEP Boys.

NORTHWEST MEETING NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER by Ed Steeble, K3IXD, Chairman

The NW region met at Paradise Grill in Frederick on September 18, 2001. In attendance were: K3IXD, K8OQL, K3SX, K3ZO, W3ZZ, W3KHZ, K2PLF, W8ZA, K2UOP, N4MM, N3VOP, W3LPL, N3HBX, and K03GA.

In the general business part of the meeting -

1) A copy of N4ZR's proposal for intra-club awards for SS was circulated and discussed. Details will be on the PVRC web page. Members are urged to operate both CW and SSB SS contests, CW SS is November 3 and 4, SSB SS is November 17 and 18.

2) Last month, the NW region announced the nomination of W3EKT as their member of the month. Ed has submitted his picture and bio to N4ZR for posting on the PVRC web site. (Since the meeting I have learned it is in the queue, Pete will be putting it on the web soon. de K3IXD) K8OQL was the next nominee by the NW region and Jerry will be submitting his bio. Keep watching the "In the Spot Light" on the PVRC web page (www.pvrc.org) for these postings.

3) Mike, N3VOP suggested that hamfests could be used to expose others to contesting. He said that the Carroll County Club's hamfest is October 28, the same time as CQWW SSB. Mike suggested a portable contest station be set up to demonstrate contesting. There are several active PVRC members in the Carroll Club and WX3B is their president. Volunteers? (Since the meeting I have learned from WX3B that the Carroll Club members are heavily involved with the hamfest itself. WX3B is receptive to having a contest station on the air at the Carroll County Radio Club hamfest.)

4) From ARRL, N4MM, said minor revisions of the DXCC rules might be coming. A DXCC committee conference call

is scheduled. Regarding CAC, they are voting on the question of dual submission in club competition contests. And about new countries, IARU is expected to announce Ducie as a new country on November 15.

5) From CQ, W3ZZ, said while the weekend for CQWW VHF contest was a good one regarding propagation, next year the contest will be a week later to avoid the conflict with the IARU contest. Many contesters reported to CQ that they chose to operate in the IARU contest instead of the CQWW VHF contest. As most know by now, CQ Contest magazine has ceased publication. The CQ contest committee is in possession of packet data and has DQ'ed some entrants since they didn't claim to be in the assisted category.

Around the table:

Ed, K3IXD - He was in the ARRL VHF contest as single op, low power, on 50, 144, 222, 432, and 1296 mHz.

Jerry, K8OQL - He will be at W8ZA for HF contests.

Sid, K3SX - He has worked WAC on 160m already this season. He has worked K3J on 80CW and has heard them on 160m CW.

Gene, W3ZZ - He operated at K8GP in the ARRL VHF contest and, unofficially, they are second in the MM class. Gene and Sid related stories about good microwave conditions.

Fred, K3ZO - He worked many grids to the NE and SW in the ARRL VHF contest. Since he couldn't make the W9DXCC hamvention, Fred operated in the SAC contest. Fred had many QSL cards from HS hams, he distributed some and will be taking the remained to the Virginia Beach hamfest.

During dinner this sparked discussions about DXCC checking, VUCC checking, schemes to fool the checkers.

Art, W3KHZ - He will be going north again very soon. He will be on in SS as VY2SS.

Marty, K2PLF - He visited K3ZO and appreciated seeing his station. He is regalanizing his tower. He is now the proud owner of a 3-inch, 24-foot mast after a trip to Dillsburg.

Bob, W8ZA - Like Marty, he was also at Dillsburg, however he was buying aluminum. His 4 element 15m beam is now 5 element, and it is fixed on EU.

Tom, K2UOP - He missed most of the ARRL VHF contest in order to attend his parents' 65th wedding anniversary celebration. He now has 5.7 and 10 GHz working. He is getting ready for the HF contests and has a C-3S fixed on SA/Caribbean. The C-3S really plays, he reported that he is able to break large pile-ups with it.

John, N4MM - He was on 6m and 2m in the ARRL VHF contest. He operated the WAE. John had his tree man out to trim up the trees.

Mike, N3VOP - He got a late start in the VHF contest due to work. However he did have two others join him so he entered as a multi-op. Mike was interested in hearing from W3ZZ and K3SX about rovers. He may build a serious rover station for June and next September.

Frank, W3LPL - He announced that tower permits most likely will be much harder to get in about five years as a new tower standard is adopted and then implemented by the counties. This is a major rewrite. First, the wind load specification is being upgraded. Then ice loading must be considered for the tower and antenna(s). And, as done TV info-mercials, he said, but wait there is more. The wind exposure parameters are changed to include the environment. Plus known, unique, conditions of the site must be addressed. Regarding PacketCluster(tm), the

foreign spots are now being filtered out.

John, N3HBX - For the ARRL 10m contest last year, he received his award but it was marked CW. Upon checking, it turned out the cabrillo log had all the entries marked CW instead of SSB. However, CT did produce the correct summary sheet. His category has been corrected by ARRL.

Chris, K03GA - He had nothing new to report. After the meeting, many gathered around his truck to view his mobile set up, complete with a 12-foot whip on top of a two foot coil with remote, motorized remotely tuned coil that enables him to covers 80m thru 10m.

The NW Region meetings are on the third Tuesday of the month. Most arrive around 6PM for a buffet dinner and good conversations; the meeting begins at 7:15 PM. The October 16 meeting will be at the same place, the Paradise Grill, 1275 W. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD. 301-682-6066. It is in the Frederick Shoppers World mall.

OVER-THE-HILL LUNCH BUNCH AUGUST 22nd by Ben Shaver, AA4XU

The monthly lunch meeting of the PVRC was held at MainStreetUSA in Annandale, VA at Noon on Wednesday, August 22. The following PVRC members attended:

W3AZ Bill Leavit, K7CMZ Mel Woods, W3UJ Henry Herman, K6ETM George Sinclair, K3ZO Fred Laun, W3GN Lawrence Fadner, W4DM Dale Harris, W3CP Jim Headrick, W6AXX Howard Leake, AA4XU Ben Shaver.

The Group meets for lunch and discussion monthly. The September meeting will be held near Beltsville, MD at Route 1 and the Beltway. For travel directions telephone W3AZ Bill Leavit (301-292-5797) or E-mail ([\[email protected\]](#)) AA4XU Ben Shaver. All PVRC members and their guests are welcome.

CVCC/PVRC MEETING SEPT 11, 2001 by John Youell, W4TNX

Our first meeting of the 2001 contest season was marred by the heinous acts of terrorism earlier in the day and attendance was light. I think many people may have stayed glued to CNN or were just too upset to go out for the evening. This was a tragic day for all human beings.

We had 7 for dinner at the "Greek" and 10 for the meeting. Attendance at the "Greek" was fairly light, presumably due to the terrorism of the day. We lost two of the XYL hams, Rosalie (N4NFL) and Nancy Payne (cute blonde XYL of W4HZ, whose callsign I can't remember - sorry Nancy, I'm now over 50 you know!), between the "Greek" and the meeting. The following were in attendance for the meeting: Tony (KC4AUF) and his XYL Becky (KS4RX), Joe (AC4OB), Paul (K4JA), Barry (KF4QQY), Bob (W4DR), Jon (W4HZ), Pat (W4PW) Ronnie (WU4G) and this author (W4TNX, ex-WA4QDM).

To respect all those who suffered in today's terrorist acts, the meeting was opened with a moment of silence.

After introductions, (including my new call W4TNX - goodbye WA4QDM), we had a few business bullets and announcements:

*** Treasurer's Report - yep, we have a few bucks (Also, I got \$20 from Barry - this is your receipt, in the absence of the treasurer (W4NM)).**

*** Bill's (W4DAA) donation of A-V equipment to the club**

*** Tom's (N4ZJ) Newsletter - many people couldn't open the file this month (did anything change?) For those of us who could open the file, it was a great newsletter and thanks, Tom!**

*** W4JA - Paul put on an outstanding summer open house of his super contest station, if you haven't seen his web**

site, you can find it via qrz.com - it is awesome!!

* CVCC now has the Club Call of W4ML

Announcements:

* Va. Beach dinner for Va. DXCC on 9/22/01 at 1830 UTC at Tripps on Independence Blvd. at Va. Beach - W4SD needs a "head count" if you are interested. Use QRZ.COM to reply.

* Va. Beach Hamfest: 9/22-23, 2001 Va. Beach Convention Center

* Christmas Dinner will be at the Steak and Ale near the normal CVCC meeting place - Roy (WK4Y) lined this up early, as usually, we are too late to get a good date. I think we got the 2nd Tuesday in December, but confirmation to follow.

Program:

* W4HZ - Packet: Two Lightning hits this summer! Bummer! Totaled everything in the shack and on the tower. A couple of receptacles out as well. We will see what the insurance folks will cover and regroup.

* K4JA - Paul reported on his M/S operation in the WAE contest this past weekend. They ended up with about 2.1 million points with 2232 Qs and 214 DX. They were pleased with running about 111 Euro QSOs on 80 meters! Score-wise, Paul thinks he may have been a little naive on the intricacies of delivering the QTCs, as they were left with about 450 at the end of the test. My observations were that K4JA was "kicking butt" from a QSO standpoint!

Next Program possibilities:

* Tony (KC4AUF) may have a program on a Light House "dx-pedition" that he and his Elmer-Sponsored Group did recently, as K4L. This effort received coverage from the Richmond Times Dispatch.

* Donnie (AC4HB) - keyers

* Tony (KC4AUF) - Pitcarin Tape

MEETING OF SWVA/PVRC

by Jerry Haislip, K1SO

The SWVA chapter of PVRC met on August 4, 2001, at the Roanoke Valley Hamfest. Members present at the Hamfest were, SWVA chapter Coordinator and Trustee of PVRC, John/K4IQ, members Buddy/W4YE, Mark/N2QT, Mike/N4GU, Anthony/WM3T, Randy/KC9LC (who was seen leaving the Hamfest with some nice old equipment), AB4YZ/Ray, and K1SO/Jerry. Guest at the meeting was David/KK4WW from Foundation for Amateur Radio Service (F.A.I.R.S.). David just returned from his trip operating as J79WW. With all of the busy schedules of members the Hamfest seemed to be a great place to hold the summer meeting.

Contesting results were discussed concerning PVRC ARRL 10 meter event. The high placement of John/K4IQ in the 160 meter Contest and upcoming events.

Lots of the members of SWVA - PVRC chapter took part in their local Field Day events. WM3T/Anthony talked about the great scores on CW the Franklin County ARC had during the summer weekend. With CW ops like W4YE/Buddy, the scores had to be good! AB4YZ/Ray and Jerry/K1SO took part in the FD event of the Roanoke Valley ARC and felt the scores were somewhat higher than last year. It will be interesting to see just how the clubs did in the annual event.

The next meeting of the SWVA chapter was not set and informaton will be sent out by e-mail.

SWVA PVRC MEETING MINUTES 9/21/01 by Mike Barts, N4GU

The SWVA chapter of PVRC met on September 21, 2001 at Shaker's Restaurant in Roanoke, VA. In attendance were

John, K4IQ, Gordon, K1GG, Susanne, WOMAN, John, W4MAN, Bill, WA4BKW, Josh, KF4YLM, Mike, N4GU, and Chris, KG6AR.

After dinner we began the meeting by catching up on everyone's activities during the summer and their preparations for the fall contest season.

KG6AR has been very impressed with the performance of his Butternut verticals. His ridge top QTH with the great view to the NE probably helps his signal to Eu.

N4GU now has his new AB-621 mast up sporting a C4S and a 30m hamstick rotatable dipole. Of course, he did forget to attach the pulley and rope to the top so an 80m antenna could be pulled up later. An antenna party will be scheduled soon to correct that mistake.

KF4YLM has been busy working on the shack at K4KDJ (VA Tech), so we should hear some good activity out of there this fall. Josh also runs the campus radio station so he pretty much lives and breathes radio.

WA4BKW has been recuperating from some health problems but is mended now. He is assembling a K2 and hopes to get it finished soon.

W4JAM and WOMAN now have their tower up with a KT34 on top. John hopes to get another tribander on the tower before CQWW. They visited the South Florida Contest Club's summer get together while visiting family. Susanne got to see all eight of her grandchildren.

K1GG now has an 80m rotatable dipole at 150'. He hopes to get his 40m beam repaired before the contest season starts.

K4IQ is planning on a 2 el 40m yagi for his tower soon.

The new PVRC Intra-club competition for Sweepstakes was discussed and plans are being made for domination by SWVA ;-)

The next meeting of the SWVA chapter will be Friday, November 2 at the Shoney's restaurant in west Salem, VA.

SHORT NOTES by the editor

If this issues arrives in time, there is a day and place change for the October central meeting. It will be at the Vienna Elementary School near the usual library location but on October 1st.

Glen Kurzenkabe, K3SWZ reminds us that there will be a Hambest in Harrisburg on October 14th.

A great time and good eating was had at the annual fowlfest held at W3Y0Z, Marty Johnson's "park". Signed in were: AI3M, K1EFI, K1HTV, K2PLF, K2YWE, K3DI, K3GEG, K3GV, K3IRV, K3KZ, K3TW, K3VQ, K3ZO, K4JA, K4JAB MMRC, K4MUT MARC, K4VV, KB3FRX MARC, N3RR, N3RR, N3UM, ND3A, W1BZR, W3AZ, W3AZD, W3HXF VWS, W3KN, W3LPL, W3OQ, W3OU, W3TEF, W3UJ, W3UR, W3Y0Z, W6AAN, WB3ANE, WF3J, WR3L, and WR3Z.

Tyler Stewart, K3MM will be P40MM in the CQWW RTTY contest.

It was nice to hear from a long time member who has moved away. Charter Member Bill Schuchman, W7YS (Former call W4JUY in Falls Church) is still active in Flagstaff,AZ getting a Certificate for Continental Winner Single

Op 14mhz CW in the 2000 Russian DX Contest, a First Place AZ and 3rd place USA in the 2000 Florida FQP, a First place Single OP CW AZ in the 2000 IARU HF World Championship and has won the N. AZ DX Assn Club Plaque for the 3rd year in a row for the ARRL SS CW with a clean sweep. Bill is also a CQ Awards Checker, DXCC Card checker and VE.

Fred Laun, K3ZO reports that Sep 21st is the 80th birthday of Bill Leavitt, W3AZ, longtime member of PVRC who first joined in the late 40's as W3MFJ. He still regularly submits scores for the club and maintains a FB station.

John, W4TNX (x-WA4QDM) was at the hamfest at Va. Beach and Bob, (W4DR). Rosalie (N4CFL), and Jim (W4PRO) gave a presentation on their YK9A DX'pedition. They had a pretty good audience and with the current world situation, YK could be a really rare country in the future.

Tyler Stewart, K3MM wrote a FREE "PVRC Needs You" advertisement for the October Autocall. I appended a description of the SS exchange and listed the name, city, and home telephone numbers for readers to call for information. Listed are: K2AV, K3DI, K3IXD, K3MM, K3TZV, K4IQ, K4VV, N3OC, N4ZR, W3PP, W4MYA, W4ZYT, and WR3L.

S C O R E S

by Bob Dannals, W2GG

* * Changes/additions/deletions
to W2GG via [\[email protected\]](#) * *
= missing information

ARRL VHF SS RESULTS (#1 -9/20/01)

CALL	PWR	BND	QSO	MULTS	TOTAL
SINGLE OPERATOR					
W4RX	H	11	680	251	297,937
K3DNE	H	6	592	172	155,660
K2UOP	H	#	199	97	32,010
K3ZO	#	2	###	##	30,498
N4MM	L	#	248	57	14,136
N3II	L	2	211	64	13,504
K3DSP	L	#	##	##	1,650
WM3T	L	2	55	29	1,595
NX9T	L	2	39	25	975
W2GG	L	3	18	##	200
10 LOGS			TOTAL		548,165

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